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THE UNIVERSAL MEDIATION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN

IN THE WRITINGS OF BLESSED ALBERTUS MAGNUS.

This article has been prepared to furnish matter for Directors' talks about the above mentioned doctrine, for the definition of which many Sodalists are praying. The Feast occurs on May 31. We follow entirely the learned article of Father J. M. Bover, S. J. (Aragon) as set forth in "*Gregorianum*", Vol. VII pp. 511-548, Rome, 1926, (also issued in pamphlet form by the Gregorian University, Rome).

Father Bover affirms that Blessed Albertus speaks of the doctrine as *certain, admitted by all*, and *contained in the deposit of revealed truth.* In the preface of his "*Mariale*", so often quoted here, Blessed Albertus remarks with unconscious humor: "We do not intend to adorn the glorious Virgin *with our lies.*"

1. The eminent dignity of the Mother of God is the basis and measure of her mediation.

a) **Mary is the supreme mistress.** Commenting on Apoc. 12, 1: "And a great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet", Blessed Albertus writes: "In her, the splendor of God shines forth in miracles, **** Whatever grace in the Church is signified in the moon, is owing to her merits. Whatever light shines in the blessed in heaven, is ascribable to her. For she is the mother of the Redeemer who opens the door of the heavenly kingdom." (1).

Applying to the Blessed Virgin the words of the Psalmist (Ps. 44, 10) "The queen stood on thy right hand in gilded clothing, surrounded with variety", he concludes that **the splendor of the Deity came upon her and therefore she is the Mistress of all.** "The Blessed Virgin was the mistress of all creatures, since she was the mother of the Creator, the helper of the Redeemer, the Queen of creation and of regeneration." (2). "For she is the mistress of all whose Lord is God." (3). "She is the sovereign of the whole Church." (4). "She is the Empress of the whole world. ** In her is to be found as a matter of ordinary right, the perpetual fulness of heavenly power. ** In her is the lawful sovereign (dominandi) power to bind and loose through her imperial command (per imperium)" (5).

The Pope's power is not as great as that of the Blessed Virgin: "for Our Lord the Pope has the fulness of power in this life, but not in heaven, nor in purgatory, nor in hell: whereas the Most Blessed Virgin has all power in heaven, in purgatory and in hell." (6) In God and Mary, power "was equal in kind (in genere), since she is the queen of the same kingdom of which He is king." (7) This power seems in accord with sound reason on account of the dignity of her Son. "The Son crowned His Mother by being born of her, since by that birth He immediately permitted her to be the Mother of God and the Queen of Mercy." (8).

b) She is truly the **Queen of Mercy**, because "she is truly, rightly and strictly the mistress of all that is included in the mercy of God. *** Likewise, if '*mercy*' be taken *transitively*, she may truly and strictly be said to be the Queen of Mercy, since she is the cause of all mercy and the reliever of all our misery. So too, if '*mercy*' be taken *intransitively*, the sense will be: 'She is mercy itself.' *** And the most appropriate name of the Blessed Virgin, according to her highest dignity, is precisely that of 'Queen of Mercy'. (9).

c) *Because* she is, and *as* she is queen and mistress, she is eminently above all heavenly spirits, who

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(1) In Lucam 10, 38 "Factum est autem," in fine par. 4.

(2) Mariale sive Quaestiones super Evangelium "Missus est Angelus Gabriel", often cited as "*Super Missus*", Q. CLXVI: the fourfold sense of "*benediction*" is verified in Mary.

(3) Mar., Q. XXIX, II vers. fin. *Mary* the appropriate name for the Mother of God.

(4) Sermones, Dom. XVII post. Trin.

(5) Mar., Q. XLIII, sec. II, in fin. par. penult. Mary did not receive Orders, but whatever dignity and grace is in them is hers. Priests have spiritual and temporal power from God, but it is either subdelegated or vicarious; Mary has the perpetual fulness of celestial power as a matter of ordinary right (ex auctoritate ordinaria). The priests bind and loose through the keys; Mary has the lawful "dominative" power to bind and loose through her imperial command (i. e. ? Christ is still her Son; her wish is as a command to Him; it procures the efficacious grace necessary for forgiveness (?).

(6) As in (5), in fine.

(7) Mar., Q. CLXV.

(8) Mar., Q. CLXIV.

(9) Mar. Q. CLXII, 8, 9, 10 and "Has rationes".

are only servants. "Mary is not one among all, but one above all." (10). Hence the whole city of God, calls her "the blessed mother of pardon, grace and glory." (11). In Mary are verified the four meanings of "blessing", namely: "the removal of a curse, extensive fecundity, the grant of extraordinary grace, the united praise of admirers." (12).

2. Mary is the new Eve.

Just as the bad angel spoke to Eve persuading her to taste the fruit of perdition, so the good angel greeted the Blessed Virgin with his words of praise. Following the well-known play upon words, Blessed Albertus says: "In this name 'Ave', that of "Eve" was reversed. This is 'Ave' without the triple 'vae' of corruption (in conceiving), discomfort (in pregnancy) and pain (in giving birth) which Eve incurred by her sin." (13).

The relation of Mary to Eve implies a contrast and a parallel. As to the *contrast*, the blessed doctor says: "Mary was not to be called by the name of Eve, since she was really and effectually the opposite of Eve in everything. The latter ruined (the human race), the former saved it, whence she changed the name of Eve, not only in word but in fact." (14). And of the *parallel*. Blessed Albertus exclaims: "See how our Eve, 'the mother of all the living' through grace, is affected quite differently from Eve, 'the mother of the living' through sin and misery". (15).

3. Universal mediation.

Let us pass to the texts in which it appears that Blessed Albertus relies on *reasons* and not simply on words such as "mediation", "mediatrix", etc, in attributing to the Blessed Virgin intervention and direct, universal action in the field of grace. As is plain, the Blessed Virgin is necessarily an instrument, in the hands of God, a subordinate cause, intermediate between the principal cause and its effect, between God and grace.

"The Blessed Virgin was the reconciler and mediatrix of sinners, the saver of all sinners and the preserver of the just." (16). The name of Mary is most fittingly applied to the Blessed Virgin ** to designate her position as a mediatrix. Through her, the human race is recalled (to God's friendship) by her example, her prayers and her merit." (17).

"The Blessed Virgin is truly called the *gate of heaven*, because through her the world received whatever created or uncreated grace came or was to come into it; she is the mother of all good things, the mother of grace and the mother of mercy. ** Through her entered whatever good ever descended from heaven to earth, and conversely." (18). "Thou didst find uncreated grace and in it and with it, all created grace. ** She found it ** because she was the first to recover it for the human race which had lost it. Therefore, all men have grace again through her, as is plain in her privilege of being the Mother of all, and her other privilege of being the Gate of Heaven." (19). "The blessedness of the Saints, rising in the fountain-head of the Holy Trinity, flows into the humanity of Christ. The Blessed Virgin Mary, like a splendid aqueduct of glory, receiving blessedness from Christ, carries it to the angels, the Patriarchs, etc., and thence to all the other Saints." (20).

The mediation of the Blessed Virgin is twofold, he affirms: through her, grace comes to us: The Blessed Virgin, 'justified us, she stood forth as the mother of mercy, through whom true peace came down from heaven." (21). "Through her we go to the Son and the Father. She who found the way of atonement for all men, received grace beyond all of them. Through her we have access to the Son, and through the Son to the Father." (22).

Much is contained in this text: the mediation of the Blessed Virgin with her Son is put on a level with the mediation of the Son with the Father: each is necessary in the present scheme of salvation. This mediation does not consist so much in her bearing the Son for us, as in the fact that through her we can come to the Son. Since she above all other persons received the fulness of grace, we all receive this grace from her and through her.

4. The superabundant fulness of grace in the Blessed Virgin.

Like Christ, though in a secondary and subordinate manner, Mary is the mediatrix of graces, because she is full of grace. She is not the mediatrix of any grace which was not in herself; but every grace was in her, and by her and from her is passed on to men. As is well said by Blessed Albertus: "Other saints received created grace in a limited fashion (particulariter), but she received created grace without limit (universaliter), and uncreated grace uniquely (singulariter)." (23). "She distributes all good things universally. Hence she is said to be the *Star of the sea*: because she is always filled in the highest degree with all the graces of the present life. Thence comes her name of Mary *(Maria)*; because just as all waters are gathered together in the sea, in her all graces are found united." (24). "The fulness of grace was announced to the Blessed Virgin, which (fulness) was the origin of and means to every grace and the cause of (its?) transference to the human race, according to man's situation both in this life and in the next. ***** And hence, since this fulness contains spiritual and corporal graces, she is said to be 'full of grace." (25) "She transmits to others the fulness of her grace." (26).

The *fountain*, the *torrent* and the *aqueduct* are the images under which Blessed Albertus often presents this superabundance. "She is the *unfailing fountain* of water through the plenitude of her grace; from her the sinner receives the pardon of his fault, the just man the purity of grace, the tempted an alleviation of his trial, the devout man a taste of the sweet consolation of wisdom. ****** The Virgin, full of grace, pours it forth for all even to satiety. *** The torrent which thence bursts forth with great impetuosity is the flood of her sweetness." (27). "She, like a channel brings us the floods of graces which in the past flowed uselessly away." (28).

What has thus far been said, has been admirably resumed by Blessed Albert in his response to the question: "What has come to us from the fulness of Mary's graces?" "That fulness," says he, "was in every sense

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(10) Mar. Q. LXXXI.

(11) In Luc. 1, 49.

(12) Mar. Q. CLXVI (a good example of medieval ingenuity in developing a thought).

(13) Serm. LVII, Annunt. Cf. In Luc. 1, 28, "Ave," par. 2.

(14) Mar., Q. XXIX, sec. III.

(15) In Luc. 1, 34, "How shall this be done?", Eve puffed up by the serpent's promises; Mary, humble, faithful to virginity.

(16) Mar., Q. CXCI.

(17) Mar. Q. XXIX, sec. II.

(18) Mar. Q. CXLVII, par. ult.

(19) Mar. Q. CCIV, Responsio.

(20) Serm. XLV, OO. SS. par. I.

(21) Mar., Q. CLXXVI in fine.

(22) In Luc. 11, 27 "Beatus venter", "Sextus hujus beat."

(23) Mar., Q. CLIV.

(24) Mar., Q. XXIX, sec. II.

(25) Mar., Q. XXXII sec. II. ("Hic annuntiatur B. V. plenitudo gratiae, quae est origo et medium omnis gratiae, et etiam causa in humanum genus transferendae, et secundum statum via et patriae." So in edition of 1651. *Many of these questions require explanation, which is usually to be found in answers to later questions, or incidental to other discussions elsewhere* Cfr. QQ. XXXIV. XXV).

(26) Mar., Q. CLXXVII, at the end.

(27) In Luc., 10, 38, "haustum dulcem sapientiae consolationis consolantis".

(28 In Luc. 1, 28, "Ave".

of the term, the most perfect fulness. For there is a fulness which *gives but does not receive*; and that befits God alone. There is another which *receives and gives but does not retain*; such is the fulness of the *channel*. And thus the Blessed Virgin is full of grace, that is, filled with all the graces destined for other persons, all of which graces, individually, pass through her hands ** (29). There is a second fulness which *receives and h lds* instead of giving away; such is the fulness of a *vessel*. And according to this fulness, Mary was full of all graces. Then there is the fulness which *receives, and gives away, and retains*; this is the fulness of the *fountain*, which itself is full but is ever overflowing. With this fulness too was Mary filled; grace continually flows from her, while she herself is always full of grace. *** From all this, therefore, it is manifest in what way the most Blessed Virgin was filled with grace, with every grace, with every fulness, in every way." (30).

5. Mary's universal patronage.

The intervention of the Blessed Mother in favor of men who live amongst so many and such great perils and necessities, has time and again taken on the form of patronage, defense, protection or aid. This affords another view of Mary's universal mediation. "Protection given to others reached its highest point in her: because she protects us from the enemy with her help, and from the wrath of her Son by her intercession and her example." (31). "She helps all who seek her in the moment of their need. ** Never has she failed anyone in his necessity." (32). "Each guardian angel takes care of some particular human being, but Mary is the universal guardian of every individual, and has a most singular care of all. The servant tends to what has been committed to him, but it is the Lord and Lady who have the care and custody of all." (33).

This universal care and custody seems enough of itself to justify the title of Universal Mediatrix.

6. The manifold intervention of the Blessed Virgin in the world of grace.

The difficulty which many find in this doctrine of the Blessed Virgin's mediation in the matter of graces does not arise so much from her position midway between God and man, as from her direct and universal intervention with respect to grace.

Let us listen to Blessed Albert.

a) **Mary is the dispenser of grace.** "If anyone ** lacks any virtue, let him ask it earnestly of the Blessed Virgin, and it will be given him; for she is the treasurer of Jesus Christ." (34).

b) **Mary is the best dispenser** because of her generosity and liberality. "She excels in liberality. For she gave God to the world and the world to God and the kingdom of heaven to every man." (35). "She never failed to give to anyone who should have received, and besides, she gave all that she should." (36). "The birds of the air lodged in its branches, that is: the souls of the saints, winged with virtues, rest in the branches of the Blessed Virgin who offers them her fruit." (37).

c) **Mary is the light and guide of travellers,** and therefore the *Star of the Sea*. "The Blessed Virgin is the enlightener of heaven and earth. ** There are two suns in heaven, the Son of God and His Mother. These two suns look upon all things, that is: for every service rendered them, they will give special, eternal rewards." (38). "She is the guide amid the surging billows of temptations, because she is the *Star of the Sea*. She is the enlightener of those who gaze upon her (contemplantium). She is the mistress and protectress of the troubled." (39). "Blessed Mary is likened to a star, because the six properties of a star, are verified in her. ** Just as the night is illumined by the star, so the whole Church is filled with light by the Blessed Virgin. (Wis., 7, 10). ** The Blessed Virgin should be loved very much by every Christian, because she is his unfailing light. No one ever sins to such a degree but that if he wishes to return to her by true repentance, she becomes at once like a lamp to his feet (Ps. 118, 105), and leads him back into the way of eternal salvation." (40). "*Star of the sea*" ** she leads all the shipwrecked into the haven of eternal salvation." (41).

d) **Mary gives not only light but strength and remedies.** "The Blessed Virgin is the restorer of the weak." (42). "Because we are weak and ill, the Blessed Mother shows us a carriage in which we may be borne. Of the four wheels of this carriage, she says: 'I am the mother of fair love, and of fear, and of knowledge, and of holy hope.' (Eccli. 24, 24) Therefore fair love and fear of the Lord and knowledge (i. e. faith) and holy (i. e. firm) hope, are the four wheels of the carriage of the Blessed Mary. Whoever has not been borne in this carriage will never have the joy of gazing on the face of God," (43). "The Blessed Virgin is the comforter of the sick ** very dear and welcome to weak sinners. For she brought forth f r the world the Son of God who is the remedy for all ills." (44).

e) **Mary exercises other offices toward us.** The Blessed Virgin Mary is the cloud which sent down a rain of divine glory upon the whole world." (45). "She is the Throne of Grace." (46). "She slew no one through word or example, but gave life to all. *** She injured no one, but liberally extended her merciful hands to all the needy." (47).

f) **Mary truly helps men in many ways** From the qualities of the pole-star, Blessed Albertus proves that Mary is properly called the *Star of the Sea*. "The star attracts iron; and the most Blessed Virgin through her boundless mercy draws hard sinners like so much iron to heaven. Again, the star guides the sailors; and the Blessed Virgin sends the shipwrecked back to the haven of salvation. The pole-star faces the north (sita est contra aquilonem — B. A. recognizes that the star is not stationary but revolves around the true pole), and the Blessed Virgin is ever turned toward the sinner. The effect of the star is threefold: it attracts iron, it gives light, it directs the sailor. Thus the Blessed Virgin attracts sinners, enlightens penitents, directs

(29) "Plena est gratia omnium quantum ad numerum gratiarum, quae omnes ad numerum transeunt per ipsius manum." Citing Eccli. 24, 41: "I ** like an aqueduct, came out of Paradise." Wis. 7, 11; Eccle. 1, 7.

(30) Mar., Q. CLXIV.

(31) Mar., Q. CLXXXV.

(32) In Luc., 10, 40: "Martha autem."

(33) Mar., Q. CLIII.

(34) Serm. In Nativ. B. M. V. II, "Fluvius egrediebatur", Gen. 2, 10.

(35) Mar., Q. CLVII.

(36) Mar., Q. CLVIII.

(37) In Luc. 11, 27, "Beatus venter" versus finem.

(38) Serm. de Assumpt. II, "Sequitur de quarto".

(39) In Luc. 2, 17, "Et venerunt festinantes". "Et invenerunt Mariam".

(40) Serm. In Nativ. B. M. V. III, initio.

(41) Mar., Q. XXIX, sec. III.

(42) Serm. Assumpt. II.

(43) Serm. in Nativ. B. M. V. I.

(44) Serm. de Assumpt. II, "Quasi aurora consurgens").

(45) Serm. in Dom. I Adv., initio.

the innocent. She draws away from sin, shows what is just, and directs to glory." (48). " She is the hope of pardon for those who regret their sins and expiate them in this world. ** The innocent who are rich in grace have a channel of grace in her which keeps them from sin. (Eccli. 24, 41). ** Prelates venerate her as their Lady. ** The blessed attribute all their glory to her as the cause of their happiness." (49). " She is pleasing to men through the grace of her *mercy*, which makes her compassionate towards the miserable; through the grace of *kindness* with which she receives the miserable benignly; through the grace of *helpfulness*, with which she succors the unfortunate in his need; through the grace of *consolation*, by which the miserable and the despairing are often reconciled by her to her Son (50). She illumines the saints in glory (hence her title of *enlightener*); and guiding those who are tossed about in the storms of temptations and doubts, she is called the *Star of the Sea*; she is the *mistress of all the just* for whom she merits grace; she is the *pardon of penitents* who lament their sins — hence her title of "*bitter sea.*" (In Matt. 1, 18).

(To be concluded).

(46) Serm. LIII, I.

(47) In Luc. 11, 27.

(48) Mar., Q. CXLVI. "Benedicta tu". Good example of B. A.'s style.

(49) In Luc. 1, 48. "Quia respexit humilitatem", in fine.

(50) In Luc. 11, 27, "Beatus venter", in par.: "Decem autem privilegia."

A NEW APOSTOLATE FOR WOMEN'S SODALITIES.

Time and again has the Church protested against immodest fashions in women's dress, which have such disastrous effects on morals in town and country. In many churches, the Sacraments are denied and in others even entrance is prohibited to women whose dress (or lack of it) is gravely offensive to Christian modesty. The indignation of moral theologians against these fashions seems all in vain.

No wonder that the bishops in almost every land have issued repeated condemnations of these vain and dangerous fashions.

The sovereign Pontiffs have always been foremost in the effort to stamp out the evil. Pope Benedict XV, for example, on several occasions spoke against women who were forgetful of their own dignity, and in this he was but following the example of Pope Pius IX who in his Brief of August 8, 1868, had praised the campaign which was being carried on in France by Marie de Gentelles against these immoral excesses. The present Holy Father, Pius XI, is doing his utmost to remedy the evil, and has returned to the subject on many occasions in his public utterances (1).

Unfortunately, the words of the Holy Father and the Bishops are not producing the full effect which all good people have a right to expect.

Certainly no one more than the Sodalists should labor ardently and perseveringly that the exhortations of the Pope and the Bishops be listened to and put into execution. Here is an apostolate for women Sodalists which is truly " modern ", opportune and necessary in the highest degree! The matter is of such importance that we propose that Directors of women's Sodalities enlist their members in this new crusade against immodest fashions and all who favor them.

Married women Sodalists, especially are in duty bound to lead in giving a perfect example always and everywhere in their own persons. Moreover, they should forbid *their daughters* everything injurious to modesty and purity or which may accustom children to loose ways of acting or dressing, a matter in which even very good Sodalists may here and there inadvertently offend (2).

Besides ecclesiastical authorities, many other thinkers and rulers are opposed to these abuses.

1) Thus writers on *Hygiene* affirm that these fashions will be the cause of the speedy and entire ruin of women, that they will weaken their constitutions and be detrimental to beauty and health as well. These fashions, they say, are among the foremost causes of bodily deformity, disease and the decline of nations.

2) All *sociologists* say that the fashions contribute heavily to the terrible scourge of the diminishing birth-rate which is gradually devastating some countries and leading their population to extinction.

3) Although hygiene has progressed very much, the fashions nevertheless are one of the principal causes of *infant mortality*.

4) *Artists* also complain that the manner of dressing today is neither delicate nor marked by good taste or common sense, but that it has gone over to the ugly, the inharmonious and the trivial.

5) What wonder is it that these abominable fashions are proscribed even by atheists, the religiously indifferent and the so-called " lay " schools and governments? Thus for example, about two years ago, a modest dress was prescribed for the girls of a public commercial school in Prague; not long ago, the same regulation was made for the school-girls in Hungary; the decree issued by Dictator Pangalos in Greece is well

(1) Detailed accounts of His Holiness' statements will be found in all *Messengers of the Sacred Heart* for May, 1926, and in almost all *Marian publications*; special attention is drawn to the Holy Father's words on the occasion of the canonization of St. Magdalen Sophy Barat, in 1925.

Less known perhaps is the letter written by Pope Pius XI on November 26, 1926, to the Married Women's Society of Cologne.

"It is greatly and bitterly to be deplored that clothes which should serve in the first place to cover the body, are, in our times (when so many women are forgetful of their dignity), but too often used shamelessly to outrage modesty and to be for all, but especially the young, the occasion and incentive of passion. Hence we have never omitted a single opportunity of condemning this source of evil and of denouncing and checking those disgraceful practices with the force of Our Apostolic authority.

We therefore ardently exhort the Matrons' Association to labor with all its might as it has done thus far, for the entire solution of this important problem."

(2) But what is to be done should it unfortunately happen that a Sodalist persists in following these fashions even after being admonished by the Director? If all means of correcting her have been tried in vain and she prefers to obey the world and sensuality rather than the Church, I should say that the same measures should be taken as are used by the Church when it forbids women in such attire to enter a sacred building or at least excludes them from Holy Communion. Such Sodalists, no matter who they are, should leave the Sodality.

known; and so are the social pronouncements of the royal rulers of England, Spain and Holland.

Even the non-Catholics among them understand that these modern fashions have brought the greatest detriments to nations in the fields of sociology, hygiene, and morality especially, since they crush the sense of shame in girls so dressed, and thus deprive them of their most beautiful ornament and the rampart of their innocence. When matters reach this extreme, there is an end of progress and even of the existence of nations.

Many more weighty arguments than those just indicated can be used by Sodalists when speaking to their Catholic sisters.

6) Above all let them expatiate on the *great sin of scandal* committed in following these fashions, and on the great damage done by offenders to their own sons and daughters (3).

Let them show how the human body receives true beauty and dignity from its intimate union with the immortal soul whose inseparable companion it will be for so many years on earth, and afterward, for all eternity. Still greater honor and beauty accrues to the body because it is the *tabernacle of grace*, nay more the temple of the *Triune God*. Hence it is honored by the Church with so many prayers, blessings, ablutions and anointings; hence its sanctification through so many prayers, Sacraments and sacramentals from the baptismal font to the sepulchre.

So that the Sodalists may speak to their sisters with more weight and authority, the Director might help them to meditate on the words of St. Paul (1 Tim. 2, 9 sqq.) and St. Peter (Ep. I, 3, 3).

It goes without saying that Directors will not fail to set forth the consummate purity and modesty of the Blessed Virgin. And since the home is a sanctuary and the woman its priestess, she ought to be clothed in a manner befitting the priestly dignity.

Arming their Sodalists with these and similar arguments, let Directors send them forth to wage endless war on evil fashions and the worldly spirit in women.

This crusade should also be directed against the modern dances which seem to do even greater harm than the fashions in dress (4).

Recently in a large city, certain *" very devout Catholic "* families took their children (between the ages of 5 and 18) to dances which were so vile and shameful as to disgust many of the parents; and notwithstanding, they did not take their children away (there were more than 100). The arguments for such cases are almost the same as those against the fashions (5). Men Sodalists, too, should take part in this holy war for the home. In the great majority of cases, victory depends upon them, because women always wish to please men and finally do what the men like. Hence the apostolate of our men Sodalists should be carried on in close union with that of the women.

We beg all Directors, therefore, to carry on a stiff and uninterrupted fight against these evils ***through their Sodalists.*** We recommend that our Fathers and Directors in each city *meet to formulate a common plan of campaign;* and we beg them to send accounts of their plans and still later, of their accomplishments to the Central Secretariate. *Editors* of Sodality magazines are also requested to make very special efforts to enlist their Sodalists of both sexes in this crusade.

(3) See what Our Holy Father Ignatius wrote on June 29, 1555, to Father Alb. Ferraresi who could not tolerate the fashions of the Venetian women (*Monumenta Historica Societatis Iesu, Monumenta Ignatiana*, ser. 1, Madrid 1909, vol. IX, p. 266).

(4) Married women are sometimes more given to dancing than the unmarried. In an account of Sodality doings, we have read " The members of the Young Ladies' Sodality may dance ; but we have never heard of them singing or playing. But at the tea held by the Married Women's Sodality, dances, songs and games were on the program". Now the dances in this particular case were certainly modest and not modern ; but this account, which does not breathe a word of the supernatural life or the apostolate, shows a strong attachment to these diversions, and affords reason for watchfulness !

(5) A Jew recently wrote : " Literature and music, dances, and in fact the whole social life, have been pulled down to the level of the negro savage ; this retrogression toward negro barbarism is the last evolution of the European toward the abyss. The hideous noise of the " jazzband " is accompanying the dances of cultured Europe to its death. What indications of man's internal vanity and emptiness !

PRIESTS' SODALITIES

I.

Archdiocese of Freiburg, Germany.

The rise of the Priests' Sodality in this archdiocese was prepared for by an association of priests which was founded in 1862, by some graduates of the grand seminary at St. Peter's near Freiburg. They were following in the footsteps of Venerable Bartholomew Holzhauser, who in the seventeenth century, had given to Germany " *The Institute of Secular Clerics Living in Community* ". Archbishop Hermann von Vicari, a very pious man, was greatly consoled by their determination and most willingly approved the " statutes of this Sodality " on the feast of St. Ignatius Loyola, " The great reformer of the clergy ", July 31, 1864.

Shortly after, the celebrated Alban Stolz entered the body. It was not yet, however, a real Sodality of Our Lady. The first Sodality in Freiburg was founded during 1866 in the little seminary, for the students The next year, a real priests' Sodality, consisting of 11 priests, was begun (under the titles of the Visitation and St. Alphonsus de Liguori), and aggregated to the Prima Primaria.

Out-of town members were distributed in four " districts", each of which met monthly with a consultor presiding. By 1870, the " districts " had increased to 15, and the first mentioned association joined the Sodality, Alban Stolz being elected Prefect in 1871.

From 1871 to 1883, the Sodality could give few signs of life. The " Kulturkampf " was in full swing; the episcopal seminaries were closed; the priests ordained in 1871, were imprisoned, and those ordained later, were banished the country; the older priests were

overburdened and many of them died (among them Alban Stolz, Oct. 16, 1888).

In that very year, however Church affairs took a turn for the better at Freiburg, and many priests entered the Sodality. In 1885, an academy was instituted which is still joined by almost all seminarists who, after ordination, pass to the priests' Sodality. In 1890, there were 27 " districts " with 404 members, while in 1907, there were 48 " districts " and 1135 members. Today the whole archdiocese is " districted " and out of its 1300 priests, 1200 are Sodalists.

" District " meetings are held monthly (usually in the first week), for the usual Sodality exercises. Where possible, a religious assists with the confessions. The Sodality often works with the "*Apostolic Union*", in some cases having a " spiritual recollection " with it about four times a year.

To promote priestly studies, the Sodality requires each " district " to have a scientific session once a month. It usually is held two weeks after the religious meeting, so that the Sodalists meet twice a month.

For the Jubilee of the Definition of the Immaculate Conception, the Sodality held a solemn meeting in Freiburg, with discussions on the great importance of the Sodality of Our Lady in the care of souls, on Sodalities for priests, men, young men and young women. The result was the institution of similar meetings every other year. In the intermediate years a " Summer School " is operated for a week. The first of these "Summer Schools" was held in 1906, and treated of " Modern Biblical Learning", " Jesus Christ ", " Religious Instruction in Schools of Commerce and Schools for Workingmen", etc. The number of priests who attend varies from 200 to 300. The greater part of the expense is paid by the priests' Sodality. This year in memory of Bp. Ketteler, labor problems will be treated.

Alban Stolz, in 1871, proposed a worthy apostolic work to the Sodality: namely, the care of a group of Catholics living among the Protestants of Prussia, " the Diaspora ". Rostock was unanimously chosen, and from 1871 to the present, even in the hardest times, the church there constantly received aid. This year however, will see an end of this service, because the priests of the archdiocese attend to the needs of the " Diaspora " now in another way.

The greatest apostolic service however, rendered by the Priests' Sodality, was the training for directorship which it gave and the holy enthusiasm it inspired in the priests for the foundation and continuous direction of other Sodalities throughout the diocese. In 1918 there were 70 Sodalities for men and boys with 4000 members; 350 young ladies' Sodalities with 45,000 members; and many boys' and girls' Sodalities.

Another point not to be overlooked: the beautiful example of this priests' Sodality led to the formation of similar Sodalities in other dioceses throughout the world where German was spoken.

But the greatest proof of the maternal love and protection of the Blessed Virgin towards these priestly servants of hers, is, in the judgment of the Sodalists themselves, the preservation of almost every one of the priests of the archdiocese from Modernism.

The Rules of this Priests' Sodality are as follows:

1. The end of the Sodality is to help its members toward perfection in their state of life, increase in knowledge and pastoral efficiency.
2. Every priest of the diocese may become a Sodalist.
3. The Prefect, on the recommendation of the Council, is appointed by the Archbishop.
4. The Sodality is distributed throughout the diocese in districts, each headed by a consultor and a vice-consultor, who are elected by the Sodalists of the district and approved by the Director and the Prefect.
5. To secure the ascetical purpose, each district shall have an exhortation at its monthly meeting. The titular feast, August 2, shall be solemnly celebrated. The promises shall be renewed on that occasion.

Besides this, all Sodalists are bound to observe the following particular rules:

a) To prepare well for Holy Mass and make a proper thanksgiving after it.

b) To meditate daily for a half or a quarter of an hour and to make spiritual reading for a quarter of an hour.

c) To visit the Blessed Sacrament daily.

d) Daily examination of conscience, particular and general.

e) Daily rosary, or at least a decade.

f) Frequent confession, weekly if possible.

g) A real retreat annually or every other year.

h) Prayer for each other, especially at the altar.

i) When anyone is ill, and especially when anyone is near death, the Sodalists must attend him with fraternal charity, and take care that sick members, while still in the full possession of their faculties, receive the last Sacraments and dispose of their temporal affairs.

k) Every priest Sodalist must say four masses annually for deceased Sodalists On the death of a Sodalist, the Prefect must say Mass for him. Priests also who must binate, should, out of charity, hasten to give a Mass to the deceased Sodalist.

6. To attain the cultural purpose of the Sodality, a learned lecture must be given monthly to be followed by a discussion; and in alternate years, there must be a course of such lectures for a week.
7. At least every other year, at the time of the general meeting of all the Sodalities, there must also be a meeting of the entire *council* of the *Priests' Sodality*, as well as of the whole Sodality itself. Some time before these meetings, the consultors, after conferring with their Sodalists, must report on the condition of their district. The treasurer's report must also be submitted at this time.
8. On the titular feast, the Sodalists shall give such alms as they wish.

(Editor's Note: We have treated of this Sodality at length because it is so outstanding in age and merit, and is an excellent model for a priests' Sodality).

II.

Diocese of Seckau, Austria

In 1918, when this diocese celebrated the seventh centenary of its foundation, a Priests' Sodality was begun in Graz, Styria, by 36 priests who were already Sodalists. Its primary title is that of the Sorrowful Mother, its secondary patron St. Clement M. Hofbauer, C. SS. R. It has always been directed by Ours. After the religious meeting in church, there is an academic session. By July 31, 1919, 134 priests had joined and there were 17 candidates; seven years later, the number of Sodalists had risen to 226. A beginning was made with regional divisions.

The members of this Sodality have always made much of Sodality life and have cultivated it faithfully through Sodalities in their parishes.

Accordingly they procured many meetings of all the Sodalities in the various towns, joint religious services, and joint efforts corresponding to the real needs of the times, the latest of which was the establishment of a newspaper entitled "*Parish News*", which has a circulation of 25,000. Much was done in past years for the spread of good books. When German money was falling lower and lower every day, this Sodality proved a real help to its poorer members.

Its present Director, *Father Lamprecht*, writes:

"The Sodality is, I find, extremely satisfactory. From 30 to 50 of the best priests of the city and country come for the ordinary meetings, edifying us very much with their zeal and piety. I do not know of any house in our province which has so many priests coming to it for confession as this house of Graz. And the place is not easy to reach either. His Lordship, the canons, the professors of theology come just the same as the country priests, and we attribute this to the Priests' Sodality more than to anything else. The clergy of this diocese, if it can be called the best in all Austria, owes it in great part to the Sodality."

The rules of this Sodality agree with those of Freiburg, though others have been added, for example: Sodality publications are earnestly recommended to the Sodalists; a general meeting of all the Sodalists is to be held every year; any Sodalist has free access to any "district"; on the death of a Sodalist, each priest must say Mass for the repose of the soul of the deceased.

III.

Haarlem Diocese, Holland.

Similar rules are in use in the Priests' Sodalities of Holland. Still there are some points worth noting where their rules go more into detail.

As works of charity, they insist on everything to which the priest is bound by virtue of his character and his office: preaching the word of God, administering the Sacraments, special care of the sick and the poor, other matters too, which are of great moment today, such as the "patronage" and retreats.

Their Directors are to be Jesuits.

The daily order is prescribed: they are to meditate for half an hour before Mass, the latter quarter to be used in immediate preparation for Mass; if occasionally a half-hour is not available, they are to meditate for at least a quarter of an hour; the same space of time at least, is to be given to thanksgiving. Matins and Lauds must be anticipated. St. Ignatius' Additions for meditation are to be observed.

Absence from the Sodality meeting, must be explained to the Prefect within eight days.

They are to be cautious in their conversation, especially with women. So too in reading books: not only must they avoid bad books but even those of little orno value.

They must take very accurate care of their own temporal affairs and those of others.

They must excel in fraternal charity not only towards their fellow Sodalists, but towards all their companions in sacred orders.

These are practically the rules of the Priests' Sodalities of *Amsterdam*, *s' Gravenhaage*, *Haarlem* and *Rotterdam*.

CHRONICLE

A Three-Year Cycle of Sodality Papers was prepared by the *Philosophers' Sodality Academy* in the House of Studies of the **New England Province** at **Weston, Mass**, U. S. A. The second year of the cycle is now being rounded out.

The Colombian Philosophers at San Bartolome, Bogota, have recently investigated the Cycle with a view to similar activity.

Actual Section work is one of the distinctive features of the Weston Sodality Academy. Along with the Three-Year Cycle papers and the accompanying discussions, the Weston philosophers are carrying on in person some of the Sodality activities which, as Directors, they will afterwards demand of Sodalists. Obviously, this is an excellent feature of the Academy, since the personal experience thus acquired will help the future Directors to appreciate keenly the difficulties experienced by their Sodalists in apostolic endeavor.

Accordingly, there is a *Literary Section; a Stamp Section* to gather and clean stamps for mission purposes; the *Mission Section* with a sixty-peg bulletin board, which was constructed according to the specifications of the Missionary Congress held in Rome during the Holy Year. (See "Acta Congressus Missionum", issued by our Mission Secretariate, Rome). The *Catecheti al Section*, it seems, will soon be a reality.

In brief, the Three Year Cycle calls for **13 papers a year**. The first year treats the History of the Sodality; the second, The Sodality and the Sections; the third, The Director.

Bonn, Germany. In January, 1926, there were 693 **men in the Sodality,** and by December the number was 723. Five parishes are the scene of their apostolate. Their Sections are for singing, music, saving youth, and charity. The last named Section distributes its benefits to the poor (and in especial to poor Sodalists), to Sodalists on retreat, to seminarists who are sons of Sodalists, to the Japanese Mission, and to the Secretariate and Center of the Sodalities in Germany. A new Section was established last year to spread all printed matter concerning the Sodality. Its members are working to increase the number of the Sodalists; they use the spoken and the printed word to induce men to enter « The Men's Apostolate », to communicate monthly, and finally to enter the Sodality of Our Lady.

These Sodalists meet weekly and have a General Communion on the fourth Sunday of the month.

Bad picture-shows have been very successfully combated by the Sodality, which, in the face of much opposition has exhibited a number of good films to the public. About 40,000 men were attracted by the Sodality to these shows and to other public meetings during the year 1926.

The foundation of two new Sodalities was another good work of this Sodality. It is working in common with other Sodalities, and supervises other activities besides.

VERY REV. FATHER GENERAL POINTS OUT PURELY PRIVATE CHARACTER OF " ACIES ORDINATA „ AND LIMITS OF HIS POWER OVER SODALITIES.

(An extract of a private letter of His Paternity, dated March 10, 1926, and just published in the « *Acta Romana* », Vol. V, Fasc. III, anno 1927, pag. 574).

« In several letters sent to seculars as well as in some periodical, published by Ours. I have more than once seen mention made of « *Acies Ordinata* », which as is plainly stated on its title-page, is issued for the use of Ours only. On no consideration, therefore, should it be named except among Ours. The mention of it not only makes people wish to become acquainted with it, but also gives a certain right to such acquaintance.

I also find that the Father General of the Society is often represented in writings destined for externs, as the supreme Moderator of all the Sodalities of Our Lady, and he is expressly named as such. This is erroneous. The statement is true as regards Sodalities directed by Fathers of the Society. It is true also that the Father General exercises some power indirectly over Sodalities which desire aggregation to the Prima Primaria, since he does not aggregate them, unless he sees their rules to be in accord with the genuine spirit of the Sodalities directed by Ours. But, as is clear from what has been said, love for the truth compels the avoidance of such general statements which attribute to the Father General jurisdiction strictly so called over all the Sodalities of Our Lady. Prudence too, counsels the same course so that we may avoid irritating others, especially now that all Sodalities in general follow our counsels with good will. »

A SUGGESTION.

For June 5
Sodalists' Communion for definition of our Lady's Universal Mediation

An act calculated to arouse the devotion of all Sodalists would be a General Communion on June 5, the Sunday following the Feast of Our Lady, Mediatrix of all Graces, (May 31), with the intention of obtaining the speedy definition as a dogma of faith of the doctrine of Our Lady's Universal Mediation. Many Sodalities have already solemnly bound themselves to defend this privilege of Mary.

It is desirable that all should do so. What a pleasure it would be to know that all Directors were working constantly and fervently to promote this Marian activity, make it international, and hus win another crown of glory for the Sodality and the Society!

L. R.

ALOYSIAN CENTENARY

TO END WITH UNUSUAL SPLENDOR

Saint's feast to be kept as first class double within Corpus Christi octave.

As the feast of St. Aloysius Gonzaga falls this year within the Octave of Corpus Christi, its celebration would have to be suppressed entirely, or, in places where it has the rank of a second class double, its celebration would have to be put off until June 27th.

As this situation would be a great disappointment to all persons interested in the Aloysian celebrations, on petition of Father Charles Miccinelli, S. J., the General Promotor of the centenary activities, the Holy Father through the Sacred Congregation of Rites, gave leave on March 23, that this year, in all houses and churches of the Society, the Feast of St. Aloysius may be observed as a double of the first class; that in the public churches of both seminaries and colleges, where it is the custom to celebrate the feast solemnly on June 21st, there may be a *General Communion Mass* and a *Solemn Mass*; finally that in the above-named churches the faithful may gain the *plenary indulgence* granted for the feast by Popes Benedict XIII and Clement XII.

NEW BOOKS

" **Leaves from the letters of Xavier** „ , annotated by *Douglas A. Pearl, S. J.*, published by Berchmans Unit, Catholic Students Mission Crusade, St. Louis University, St. Louis, Mo., U. S. A., 49 pp., 1927.

Aside from a list of the *great dates* in the life and history of the modern St. Paul, and an *excellent map* of his missionary journeys in Asia, it is the Saint alone who speaks here in words of flame, about the crying need of missionaries in the East, of the manner of men they must be, the obstacles they will meet, he wonderful consolations they will experience in return for sacrifices made to advance the cause of Jesus Christ, All the magnetism of Xavier' s great soul, his Pentecostal spirit, and his full consciousness of the grandeur of the missionary calling, is felt in these brief paragraphs, enkindling and intensifying apostolic zeal.

No theorist wrote those letters. Long before they appeared, Europe had learned to appreciate the zeal for souls which consumed Xavier: France and Italy had seen him translate that zeal into action; Portugal had wished to retain him. Nor were these letters the first impressions of the missionary newly landed in his field. They were the fruit of many voyages and sore trials.

Let Sodalists *buy* and *read* such pamphlets, *leave them* on their parlor table, in the waiting-rooms of physicians, etc. The zeal St. Francis Xavier so powerfully arouses for the *foreign* pagan, is needed in a high degree to save the pagans *among whom almost all our Sodalists live*. The Saint's words will quicken the works of zeal already begun by Sodalists, and they will second the Director's efforts to omote apostolic activity.

Editor: *Lawrence E. O'Keeffe, S. J.*
Superiorum permissu.

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